Contact: Sandy Gutierrez Date: December 11, 2001 Release No. 01-164

## **NEWS RELEASE**

## SAPD Officer-Involved Accident

Around 2:50 this afternoon, San Antonio Police Officer Juan Antonio Morales was on his San Antonio police motorcycle travelling eastbound on the inside lane on IH 10 just before Fresno when a man driving a vehicle in the middle lane, next to the officer, lost control of his vehicle. The suspect's vehicle side swiped Officer Morales on his motorcycle then spun around and hit a 2nd vehicle. The suspect then fled the scene of both accidents. Due to the collision, Officer Morales was thrown and landed about 100 feet away from his motorcycle and was left with severe injuries.

A witness followed the hit and run suspect to Pasadena street on the city's west side where he abandoned his vehicle then got into another car. The second car was described as a Grey Pontiac with a license plate of B71 JWT.

The suspect was arrested in the 3200 block of W. Gerald on the city's south side without incident. He is described as a 33-year-old, Jose Garcia, DOB 9-3-68. He faces a charge of Failure to Stop and Render Aid and Possession of Marijuana. The Failure charge is a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felony punishable by no more than 5 years in a state prison or no more than 1 year in a county jail.

The San Antonio police officer is 11-year veteran, Officer Juan Antonio Morales, 33-years-old, assigned to the Traffic Division, Motorcycle Unit. He leaves behind a wife and four children.